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الجمهورية اللبنانية

وزارة الخارجية والمغتربين

الدائرة السياسية

قسم الغرب والامم المتحدة

١٦٦٢/٤/٥٣/٧ / ٩٧

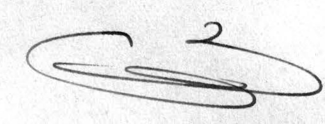
سري

حضرة رئيس الامن العام

اتشرف بأيداعكم طيه قصاصة احدى الجرائد الاميركية وفيها مقال عن الحركة الشيوعية في بيروت ، بعنوان " الباب الاحمر للمتوسط " راجيا اعارتها اهتمامكم .

بيروت في ٢٢ كانون ثاني ١٩٥١

وزير الخارجية والمغتربين



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Mediterranean's Red Door

Beirut Is Communist Portal For Infiltration of Arab Area

By A. T. Steele

BEIRUT, Lebanon.

BEIRUT is not only a busy entrepot of trade; it is also a backdoor for Communist infiltration into the countries of the eastern Mediterranean.

In most of these countries the Communist party is outlawed and its activities are held down to gadfly proportions. But the underground is constantly on the alert to exploit weakness and discontent wherever it finds them.

Beirut is a "soft" spot. Although the Lebanese government is anti-Communist in attitude, it is haphazard in its controls. Port restrictions at Beirut are so mild that political agents are able to slip in and out without much difficulty. Despite police measures, the Communist underground has apparently laid down a well knit network of party cells among workers, students and unemployed. It is probable that the Reds are utilizing Beirut as a clandestine channel of access to neighboring Arab lands.

Lebanon is a small country with a mixed Moslem and Christian population and one of the highest literacy rates among Near Eastern peoples. But the wide gap between the "haves" and the "have nots" and the corruption and profiteering so common among Beirut's wealthier elements make this a fecund field for Communist propaganda. The Communists draw most of their following from frustrated intellectuals, underpaid workers and unemployed, centered mainly in the Beirut area. Though illegal, the party does a brisk underground "business."

It was not surprising that the Communists picked the American University of Beirut for one of their major efforts. This famous institution draws students from all over the Arab world. Many of its graduates hold positions of leadership in Arab countries and many of its present students will doubtless attain similar influence in the future. Communist agitators became a troublesome problem at the university last school year and resumed activity when the new school term opened this fall.

Despite warnings from the university authorities that political activity could not be tolerated on the campus, the trouble-makers continued to stir up agitation and distribute party-line literature among their fellow students. Matters came to a head last month when ten of the most persistent offenders were suspended. Up to this writing, the Reds have been unsuccessful in their efforts to foment a student strike in retaliation for the university's action, and the authorities are hopeful that campus life will settle back into its old non-political routine. That is still to be seen.

Agitators recently staged a slogan-shouting demonstration outside the United States legation here. Leaflets inscribed with Moscow-made exhortations were thrown out, along with a few stones. Lebanese police make periodic arrests of Communist "ring leaders," but there seems to be plenty more where these come from. The number of Communists and pseudo-Communists in Lebanon can only be guessed at, but estimates run as high as 15,000. Some Lebanese minimize the Communist underground here as little more than a pin-pricking nuisance. Others see in it a subversive organization which could provoke crippling strikes and embarrassing disorders, should the occasion arise.

...of Holiday Hunting!



—Berryman, in The Washington Star